

# 5. U.S. Department of Agriculture

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USDA is the third-largest civilian Department of the U.S. Government, overseeing a variety of agencies, Government corporations, and other entities that employ more than 95,000 people at over 15,000 locations in all 50 States and 60 countries.

The Department has undergone a historic reorganization to improve coordination among its broad range of programs and agencies. This reorganization, which affects headquarters and field structures, was authorized by the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-354), signed into law in October 1994.

The reorganization focused the Department's work under the following seven mission areas, which operate over 200 programs. These areas are described in chapters 6-12 of this *Agriculture Fact Book*:

- Rural Development

- Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

- Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

- Food Safety

- Natural Resources and Environment

- Research, Education, and Economics, and

- Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

Some organizations serve the entire Department of Agriculture, including all mission areas. Among these are the Assistant Secretary for Administration (Departmental Administration), Office of the Chief Economist, Office of Inspector General, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of General Counsel, and Office of Communications, all of which report directly to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs serves as liaison between the Department and Members of Congress and their staffs, State and local governments, and Indian tribes and their members.

## ■ Departmental Administration

Departmental Administration (DA) provides leadership and guidance to ensure that USDA is managed effectively, efficiently, and fairly in its administrative program and services. The Departmental Administration Staff Offices provide support to policy officials of the Department and overall direction and coordination for the administrative programs and services of the Department. In addition, DA manages the Headquarters Complex and provides direct customer service to Washington, DC, employees.

## Office of Civil Rights

The Office of Civil Rights (CR) provides overall leadership, oversight, direction, and coordination for USDA civil rights and equal employment opportunity programs. CR is responsible for promulgating policies that will increase the participation of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities at all levels in the USDA workforce, and ensure equal opportunity in the delivery of USDA programs and services to all customers without regard to race, gender, national origin, disability, and other protected bases. CR works in collaboration with the USDA mission areas in implementing civil rights laws, regulations, and best practices in both employment and agricultural program delivery areas.

In 1999, CR focused on improving civil rights accountability systems within USDA and is developing policies on accountability, reprisal, and disciplinary and corrective actions. CR also issued departmental regulations on compliance reviews for programs conducted and assisted in the processing of civil rights complaints.

In March 1999, a consent decree was signed to settle the civil rights class action brought against USDA by African American farmers from across the country. The claims filed under the class are now being reviewed and settled.

The backlog of program complaints was substantially reduced through the efforts of the Early Resolution Task Force. Of the 1,088 backlog cases existing in September 1998, only 2 cases remain. The Statute of Limitations (Section 741 of the Omnibus Bill) Project within CR has the responsibility of reviewing program discrimination complaints filed prior to July 1, 1997.

In July 1999, the Director of Civil Rights appointed a Task Force on Sexual Orientation to update the 1994 Task Force Report and to make recommendations to address issues of sexual orientation.

CR continued to work with agencies to develop training modules in civil rights areas including sexual harassment and disability employment. USDA is exploring new technologies to deliver training to USDA employees throughout the United States.

A strong Civil Rights program supports USDA's goals. The Civil Rights program ensures that customers have full access to all USDA programs and activities, that program and equal employment opportunity complaints are handled fairly and expeditiously, and that the best supervisory and management practices are followed so that a diverse staff of USDA employees are highly productive and effective. The Civil Rights program directly supports three of the Department's management initiatives—civil rights, outreach, and human resource management.

## Office of Human Resources Management

The Office of Human Resources Management provides overall direction and leadership for USDA human resources management programs and initiatives. OHRM establishes departmental human resources management policy and represents USDA in governmentwide initiatives. The office develops and administers guidelines, principles, and objectives supporting human resources management, safety

and health management, and labor management partnerships. OHRM provides advice and guidance to USDA mission areas and provides oversight through compliance reviews. This office fully supports the civil rights initiatives of the Department's Office of Civil Rights and provides operational human resources management services for the Office of the Secretary and departmental staff offices.

OHRM manages an employee career management program to assist USDA employees in managing their careers. The program was enhanced in 1998-99 by making available to field employees an on-site 2-day Individual Career Management Workshop. A total of 12 workshop sessions were delivered to field employees at different locations nationwide.

In addition, OHRM administers the Summer Intern Program and 14 other student internships, which employed a total of 5,334 students in 1999. This is an increase of more than 26 percent from the prior year. Of the students employed, 16.8 percent were African American; 10.4 percent, Hispanic; 4.0 percent, Asian; and 3.1 percent, American Indian or Alaska Native. Also included in this group were 35 students with disabilities.

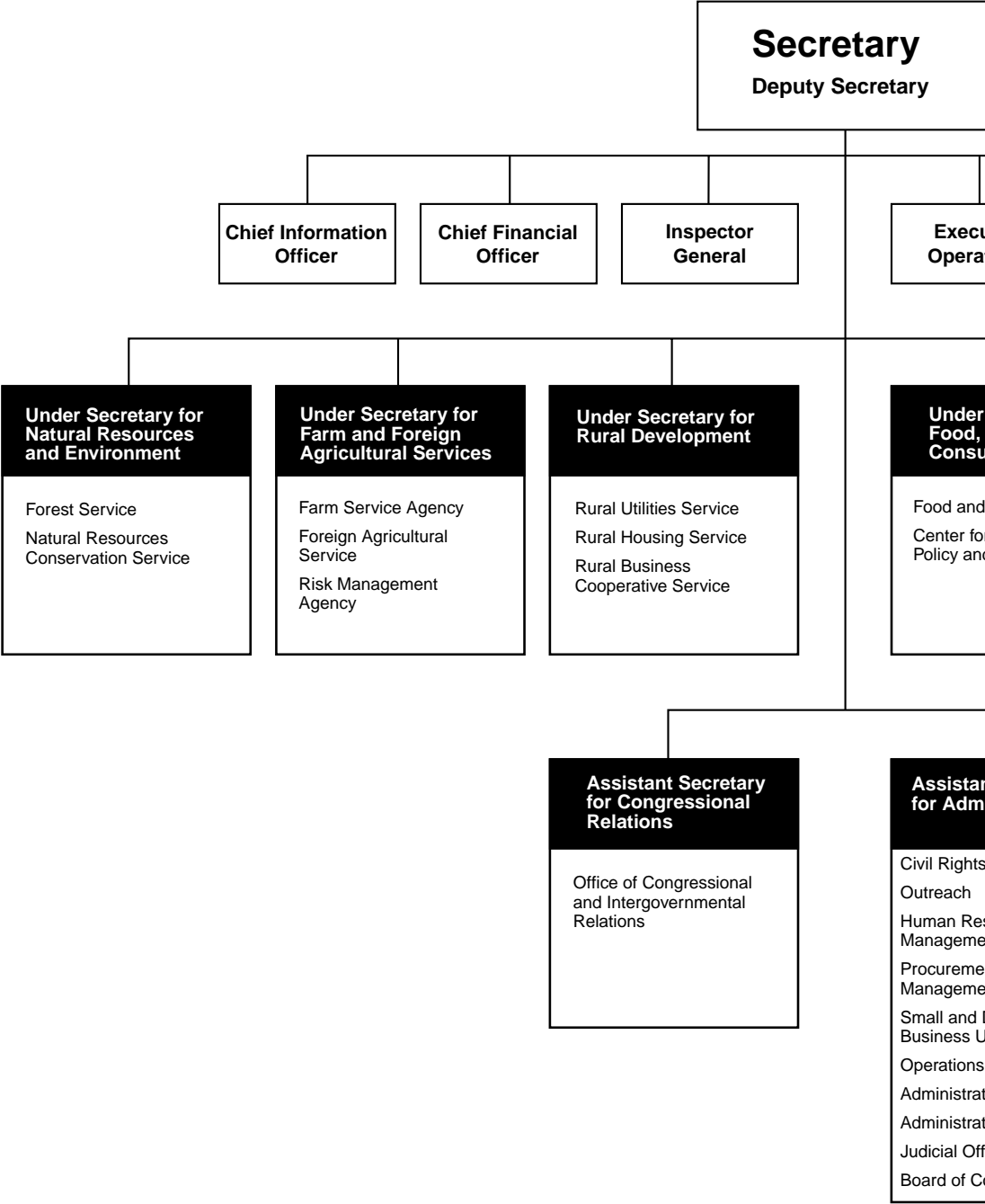
#### Office of Procurement, Property, and Emergency Preparedness

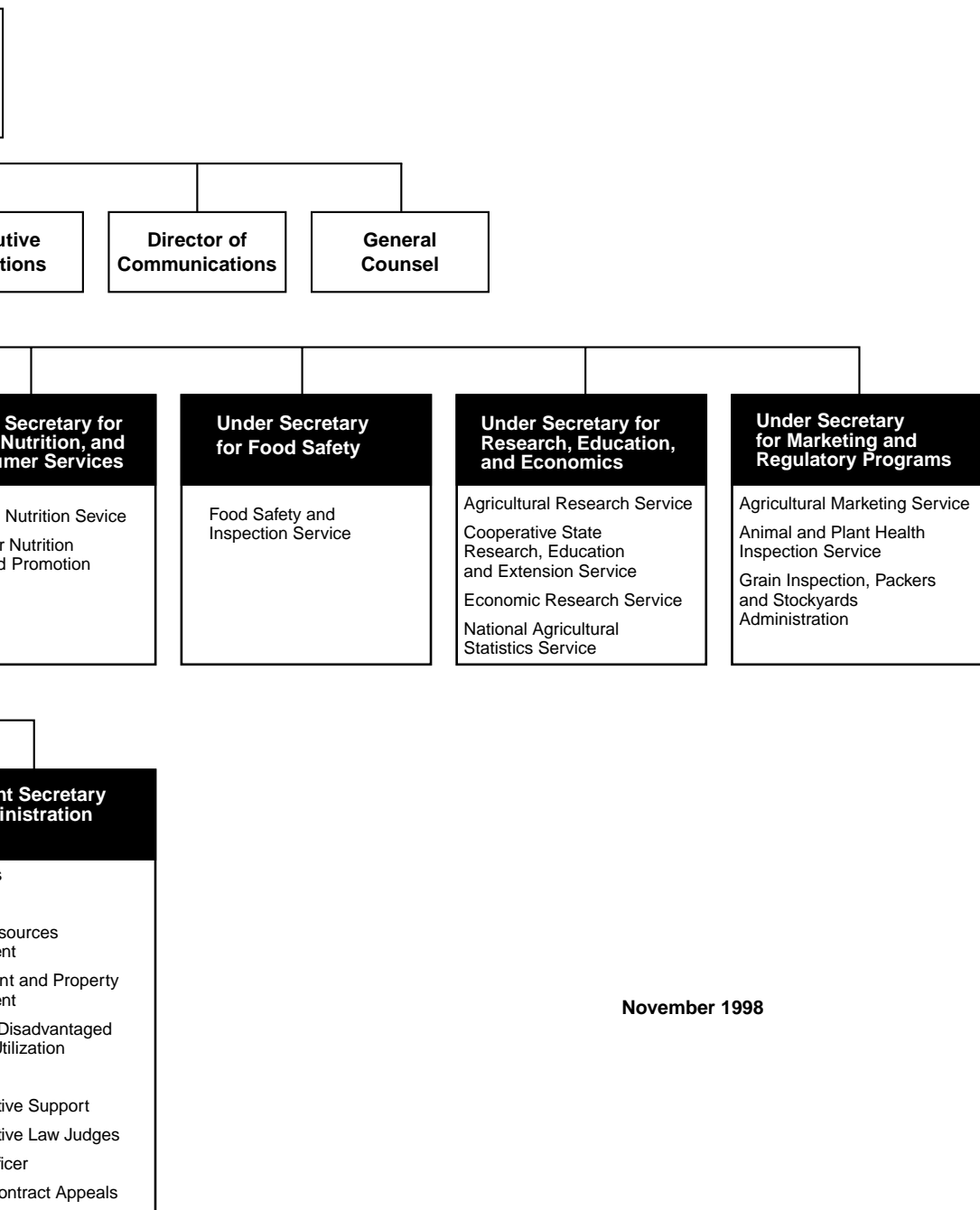
The Office of Procurement, Property, and Emergency Preparedness (OPPEP) provides leadership and policy guidance concerning procurement, property management, energy conservation, disaster management, and coordination of emergency programs. OPPEP also promotes and establishes USDA policy for alternative fuel vehicles, and the purchase of biobased, environmentally preferable, and recycled products.

OPPEP is working to simplify and reduce the cost of procurement, and to improve access to information about procurement and property management policy for businesses and other members of the public. The cost of procurement has been reduced by expanding the use of commercial credit cards (purchase cards) and the Purchase Card Management System to make small purchases. At the end of FY 1998, over 19,000 purchase cards had been issued to qualified holders throughout USDA. OPPEP also introduced a Fleet Card Program so that cardholders may purchase fuel and service for government vehicles. Over 42,000 fleet cards were issued in FY 1998. OPPEP posts USDA procurement and property management policy and procedures on the Departmental Administration web site ([www.usda.gov/da.html](http://www.usda.gov/da.html)). Businesses interested in selling to USDA can view "Doing Business with USDA" at the web site. OPPEP also posts information about disaster relief at this web site.

In October 1998, USDA published in the Federal Register *Uniform Procedures for the Acquisition and Transfer of Excess Personal Property*, in accordance with the provisions of Section 923 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996. As of June 1999, OPPEP transferred excess personal property worth \$2.1 million to 1994 institutions (tribal), 1890 institutions, and Hispanic-serving institutions.

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Headquarters Organization





November 1998

Table 5-1.

## Number of USDA employees, 1948-99

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of USDA employees</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of USDA employees<sup>1</sup></i>
1948	60,815	1974	101,430
1949	63,063	1975	103,779
1950	67,560	1976	109,276
1951	66,150	1977	113,085
1952	62,825	1978	118,563
1953	62,492	1979	122,809
1954	63,309	1980	125,185
1955	64,191	1981	117,440
1956	69,423	1982	111,853
1957	74,215	1983	109,773
1958	77,264	1984	108,598
1959	79,998	1985	106,665
1960	81,585	1986	102,997
1961	85,238	1987	102,579
1962	89,168	1988	106,552
1963	94,527	1989	109,567
1964	94,781	1990	110,754
1965	94,548	1991	110,357
1966	98,688	1992	113,405
1967	102,175	1993	112,458
1968	105,628	1994	109,830
1969	101,848	1995	103,848
1970	100,860	1996	100,710
1971	102,698	1997	98,457
1972	104,540	1998	96,410
1973	104,104	1999	95,491

<sup>1</sup>Full-time equivalent (FTE). For example, two half-time employees would count as one FTE.

Table 5-2.

## Where do USDA employees work?

<i>State</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>
Alabama	1,140	Montana	2,566
Alaska	851	Nebraska	1,391
Arizona	1,605	Nevada	328
Arkansas	1,815	New Hampshire	279
California	7,162	New Jersey	518
Colorado	2,531	New Mexico	1,357
Connecticut	157	New York	1,067
Delaware	208	North Carolina	1,790
District of Columbia	6,559	North Dakota	750
Florida	1,629	Ohio	810
Georgia	2,357	Oklahoma	900
Hawaii	429	Oregon	4,589
Idaho	2,524	Pennsylvania	1,444
Illinois	1,513	Rhode Island	32
Indiana	733	South Carolina	875
Iowa	1,840	South Dakota	816
Kansas	1,068	Tennessee	1,009
Kentucky	1,085	Texas	3,464
Louisiana	2,867	Utah	1,438
Maine	240	Vermont	229
Maryland	3,008	Virginia	1,977
Massachusetts	336	Washington	2,256
Michigan	1,105	West Virginia	659
Minnesota	1,600	Wisconsin	1,423
Mississippi	1,881	Wyoming	695
Missouri	3,905		

<i>Territory</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>	<i>Territory</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>
American Samoa	6	Marshall Islands	1
Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands	5	Puerto Rico	561
Guam	33	Trust Territories of the Pacific	1
		U.S. Virgin Islands	25

Table 5-2.

Where do USDA employees work? (continued)

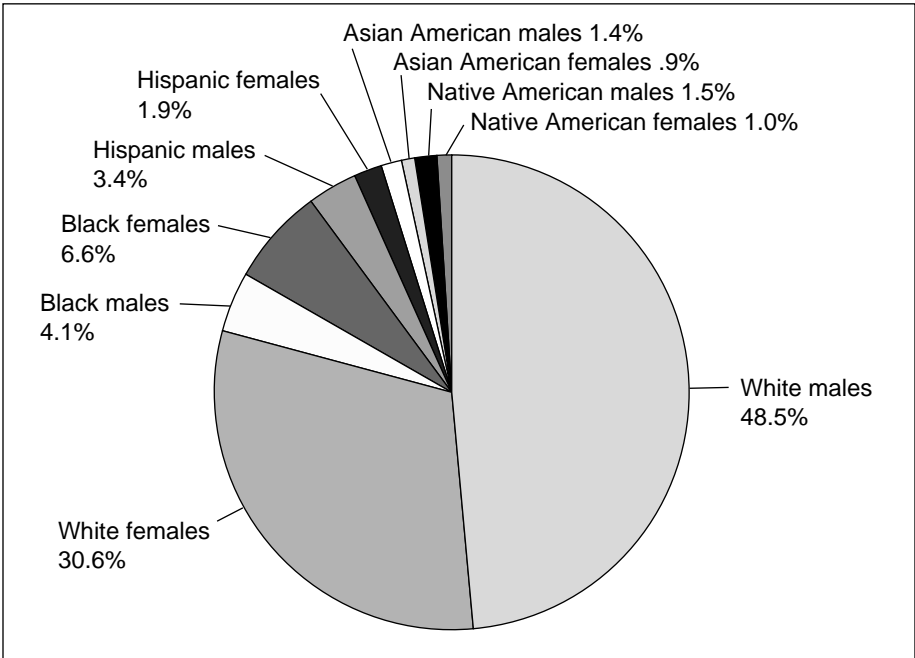
<i>Country</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>
Argentina	3	Malaysia	1
Australia	3	Mexico	17
Austria	6	Morocco	1
Bahamas	1	Netherlands	3
Belgium	6	New Zealand	1
Bermuda	1	Nicaragua	2
Brazil	5	Nigeria	1
Bulgaria	1	Pakistan	1
Canada	3	Panama	8
Chile	3	Peru	1
China	7	Philippines	2
Columbia	1	Poland	2
Costa Rica	4	Republic of Korea	2
Dominican Republic	2	Republic of Palau	3
Egypt	2	Russia	6
Ethiopia	1	Saudi Arabia	1
Federated States of Micronesia	10	Singapore	1
France	7	South Africa	2
Germany	4	Spain	2
Guatemala	5	Sweden	1
Haiti	1	Switzerland	5
Hong Kong	2	Thailand	2
India	1	Turkey	2
Indonesia	2	Ukraine	1
Italy	4	United Arab Emirates	1
Ivory Coast	1	United Kingdom	2
Jamaica	2	Venezuela	3
Japan	10	Vietnam	1
Kenya	2		

\*Permanent, full-time employees.

■ In 1999, USDA had nearly 1,000 employees with targeted disabilities in permanent full-time positions.

Figure 5-1.

USDA workplace profile by race and gender group, 1999



## Office of Operations

### Mail

Smokey Bear receives more mail than any individual in the Department. Each year, USDA receives over 180 million pieces of mail, and at the Washington, DC, headquarters alone, over 21 million pieces of mail are handled each year—for an average of about 84,000 pieces of mail processed each workday.

The headquarters mail operation is an active employer of people with disabilities. Over one-third of its employees are people with disabilities. Working closely with private and public placement organizations, the division has succeeded in bringing these employees into the work force. In recognition of its success in hiring the disabled, the division has received numerous government and private-sector awards.

The mail center is one of USDA's reinvention laboratories supporting Vice President Gore's National Performance Review, in which the Department has taken an active role. One advance is the implementation of computer-assisted mail sorting systems, which will improve efficiency and reduce by at least five the number of employees needed for this staff. Also, USDA is taking the lead in developing governmentwide mail management initiatives that are projected to save over \$2 million.

## **Washington Area Strategic Space Plan**

The Office of Operations continues to work on the Strategic Space Plan which is designed to provide modern, safe, and efficient office space for USDA employees in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. The George Washington Carver Center in Beltsville, Maryland, was completed last year. This 350,000-square-foot modern office complex provides space for over 1,100 employees. Much of the day-to-day building operation is done by Mellwood, a community rehabilitation, nonprofit organization that provides employment opportunities for persons with severe disabilities.

The George Washington Carver Center includes a telework center. The center will provide 31 work stations for USDA employees under the flexiplace concept or for short-term (3 months or less) task forces involving employees who are on temporary duty assignments in the metro area.

In addition, the first phase of the modernization of the 1.3 million-square-foot USDA South Building is well underway. This nearly 70-year-old building is much in need of renovation. When finished, this project coupled with the George Washington Carver Center will enable USDA agencies in the metro area to move out of more expensive leased space into modern and efficient USDA-managed space.

## **Print on Demand**

The Office of Operations' Consolidated Forms and Publications Distribution Center (CFPDC) and the Mail and Reproduction Division are currently offering Print on Demand services to all user agencies.

Print on Demand is state-of-the-art technology and the wave of the future in modern warehousing and forms management programs. Substantial cost savings in printing and storage costs can be accrued to agencies by utilizing this service. Cut sheets, non-carbon and double-sided forms, pamphlets, and many other printed items no longer need to be stored for future use. Instead, these items are scanned or otherwise inputted onto small optical storage discs, and then hard copies are produced as needed and only in the quantity needed to fill a specific order.

To date, CFPDC has reduced its cut-sheet inventory items by over 10 percent and anticipates that Print on Demand technology will enable further reductions of 20 to 30 percent.

## **Computers for Learning**

The Office of Operations' Centralized Excess Property Operation (CEPO) is an active participant in Vice President Gore's Computers for Learning Initiative. CEPO collects excess/surplus computer equipment from USDA and 17 other Federal agencies in the Washington metropolitan area. Initially, the equipment is offered for reuse by other agricultural agencies. Computer equipment not needed by agencies is tested and, if possible, repaired.

## **Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization**

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) provides departmentwide leadership and oversight for implementing and executing Small Business Programs prescribed under Sections 8 and 15 of the Small Business Act of 1958, as amended. It also has implementation responsibilities for Executive Order

(E.O.) 12432, Minority Business Enterprise Development, and E.O. 12138, Women-Owned Business Enterprise Development.

OSDBU develops policy to enhance the utilization of small, minority, and women-owned small businesses in the contract and program opportunities of USDA. It analyzes procurement trends and develops initiatives to improve contract awards to small, minority, and women-owned small businesses. It provides outreach to raise awareness and solicit small business interest in USDA programs, and it monitors and reports the percentage of contract awards by USDA to small, minority, and women-owned businesses.

OSDBU's goal is to provide information, guidance, and technical assistance to ensure continuous growth in the rate of small business participation in USDA programs and procurements.

If you are interested in business opportunities with the Department of Agriculture, visit our web site at [www.usda.gov/da/smallbus.html](http://www.usda.gov/da/smallbus.html) or call (202) 720-7117 for more details.

### Office of Ethics

The Office of Ethics was created in 1998 to direct and coordinate the ethics programs within the various mission areas of the Department and to service headquarters staff directly. The Office develops departmentwide policies and regulations; provides training to USDA staff on the various rules governing employee conduct, conflicts of interest, and political activity; administers personal financial disclosure reporting by senior staff; and counsels employees on these matters. Over the past year, the Office has invested heavily in Internet technology to provide online training modules for USDA staff stationed all over the world, and was the first Federal agency to offer disclosure reporting through a secure online, web-based system. In addition to USDA staff, employees from other Federal agencies and the public have accessed the ethics web site located at [www.usda.gov/ethics](http://www.usda.gov/ethics)

### Office of Outreach

The Office of Outreach provides overall leadership and coordination to assure that all potential customers have full access to all USDA programs and services. In conjunction with other USDA agencies, special emphasis is directed toward underserved populations. The Office administers the Outreach for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Program, authorized by Section 2501 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990.

## ■ Office of the Chief Economist

The Office of the Chief Economist advises the Secretary of Agriculture on policies and programs affecting U.S. agriculture and rural areas. This advice includes assessments of USDA program proposals, legislative proposals, and economic developments of importance to agriculture and rural areas. In addition, the Office of the Chief Economist is responsible for several programs, described below, that coordinate activities across USDA agencies.